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A SUGGESTED OUTLINE FOR A TERM PAPER ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHING PLAN FOR THE
SOLUTION OF A RURAL PROBLEM

1. Statement of the problem.

A clear-cut explanation of a practical farm or home problem faced by a substantial number of farm people. The problem selected should be possible of solution and of sufficient importance to warrant the attention of the extension worker. It should be stated as farm men and women would express it.

2. Diagnosis of the situation.

What are the facts as to--

Seriousness of problem?

Prevalence of problem?

Reasons for existence of the problem?

Draw upon the Federal census, rural housing survey, sociological studies, analysis of farm and home accounts, records of State and county governmental agencies and related private agencies, knowledge of extension workers, and opinions of trained observers and leading rural people for factual information on the conditions and circumstances which surround the problem and which may explain the reasons for its existence. In some instances it may even be necessary to conduct special surveys in sample areas to obtain the required data.

3. Solution of the problem.

What are the remedies proposed? What are the better practices to be substituted for the practices now followed? Is the solution in keeping with recommendations of State experiment station or other approved research data? What evidence is there that the proposed solution will be adequate under the existing conditions?

4. Goals for the year.

In view of the relative importance of the problem and the possibility of solving it; the interest of the rural people concerned; the amount of time, money, and materials available; the attention which can be given it by the teaching staff (specialists, agents, and local leaders); the likelihood of assistance from other interested agencies; how much progress can reasonably be expected during the next year? The goals should be stated in definite terms, such as the number of people influenced to adopt specific practices, the number of acres, bushels, animals, or similar units, or in other objective terms expressive of tangible progress.

5. The teaching plan.

List the detailed step-by-step procedure to be followed in putting the solution into effect. Show in logical sequence how the available teaching methods, such as general discussion meetings, method demonstration meetings, result demonstrations, news articles, circular letters, personal visits, exhibits, bulletins, radio talks, and achievement-day exhibits, will be employed to acquaint rural people with the situation and the remedy and to influence them to follow the recommended practices.

Explain how these methods will be used in an organized way with both adult and 4-H Club work and, if possible, with groups of young men and women. State how plans for cooperation with specialists, other agents, and local leaders will be worked out to coordinate activities and teaching procedures. Show how plans for cooperating with governmental and other agencies will be worked out. Set out definitely the responsibility of specialists, agents, local leaders, and other cooperating agencies. State how follow-up service will be developed to insure that all who learn the practices will use them.

6. Calendar of work.

The calendar of work should show the contemplated activities of extension workers by months. A convenient method is to record all activities on the left-hand margin of a page, placing the months of the year across the top of the page. By insertion of a check mark under the month the activity is proposed, and opposite the activity scheduled on left-hand margin, the period of time can be shown. Give thought to possible conflicts with other important activities likely to be scheduled for the same months.

7. Measuring results.

Specify units of measurement that will be in keeping with the goals set, possible of being reliably ascertained, and objective in character. Outline the kinds of records and reports to be used in measuring the spread of influence.